

Pilgrimage into the Past
un film di Austin de Besche



U.S.A, English, 78 minutes, Beta SP, Color, 2002

“A fascinating, terribly honest and challenging film. It ranks with some of the great films on the Holocaust, fiction as well as documentary. Its seemingly simple and specific story reveals universal truths, as difficult to confront now as ever, with no easy answers. One remarkable family, made up of four perfectly revealed individuals, guides us through an uneasy, revelatory past, filled with demons and unusually moving possibilities. This is a great film about memory, death, perseverance, unspeakable tragedy, and transcendence.” -Ken Burns

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SYNOPSIS

Pilgrimage into the Past tells the story of Holocaust survivor Michael Kraus and his family, as they re-walk the route of a “death march” he was forced on near the end of World War II. Michael was barely 14 years old when he and thousands of other prisoners were pushed across the Austrian countryside as the Nazis emptied the concentration camps. After the war—his parents gone—he eventually moved to America, and started a new family. He spoke little about his war experiences with his two daughters, who grew up with unresolved issues and questions about their father and the Holocaust.

Michael finally decided, more than half a century later, to re-visit this event with his family. For three days in the spring of 2000 they walked the march again. Director/cameraman Austin de Besche and his crew walked with them. *Pilgrimage* looks at those three days, and the work the family did in that time to learn more about each other and their relationships. The viewer listens and watches as the Krauses talk about surviving, being a parent, being a child, caring for each other—and the terrible events that still effect their family. The film speaks not only to Holocaust Survivors, but to anyone who has been part of a family.